

# ABERRANT™

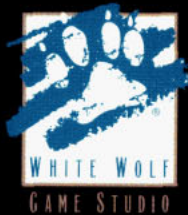
## TERAGEN

### The Old World Must be Destroyed...

Cast as monsters, villains and rogues, the novas of the Teragen are hated by Project Utopia, vilified by the media and worshiped by misfits, outcasts and rebels everywhere. Led by the powerful and charismatic Divis Mal, the Teragen seeks to create a new Eden for the Quantum born. But there can be no salvation without sacrifice. Once the Teragen deal with the fragile and unfit baselines, a bold new civilization of novas will blossom in their place.

### ...Before the New One is Created.

**Aberrant: Teragen** contains the history of the movement Utopia loves to hate and the deviant personalities that drive it. It's also brimming with new powers, including the strange techniques used by Terats to deal with Taint. Are you nova enough to learn the secrets of the One Race?



# ABERRANT®

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# CAUTERY

Deep within Allison, Shrapnel was screaming. She could swear the pint of Smithwick's in her hand was going to explode, so clear was the cymbal-crash of ripping metal ringing in her ears. She gulped down the rest of the ale, hoping it would silence her quantum self.

"Not much, as far as pubs go," Charles Ridgley said as he slid into the seat across from Allison. In three years, his smile hadn't changed at all. "Serves us right for taking a pint in Paris. Good to see you, luv."

The pub, The Wicker Man, was tucked into a corner of the *troisième arrondissement*, accessible down a steep staircase from Rue de Normandie. Its patrons were an odd mix of French anglophiles and tourists lucky enough to stumble upon its entrance and pay 40 francs for a pint of Newcastle, Guinness or Kilkenny. To some it was probably a charming bit of Éire. To Allison, who had grown up in Belfast and London, it was a bizarre hybrid, a cross between bad memories and a crass mockery. But it just was that, across the Channel.

"Yeah, it's been a while." She felt awkward and alone, in a way she hadn't in many years. She barely recognized the timber of her own voice or the beat of her own heart. She was used to being Shrapnel, quantum and rage flowing through her like air and fuel through a jet engine. Now, she was dorm'ed down for the first time since her Chrysalis. She was plain old Allison again, and Shrapnel was fighting to get out. But she needed to do it this way. To be sure.

"Well, I can't be held accountable for not seeing you, luv. You walked out of the Farmhouse on your own."

"I bloody hate that name, Charlie. You take novas and turn them into walking atom bombs for Queen and Country. Some Farmhouse."

"Better for the Queen than for some maniac...." The vigor went out of Charlie's voice as quickly as it had entered, and his patented trust-me smile came back with a vengeance. "I didn't come here to debate politics with you, Allison. You asked me here as a friend, and that's how I came. No wire, no tails, and no word to the boss."

"No gun?"

"Allison, I'm a sentimentalist, not an idiot. Why did you want to meet?" He signaled a waiter for a pint, but the dubiously Irish man barely reacted.

"I just wanted to see you. To know how you were and, well, to remember for a while." She tried to smile, but the unfamiliar fleshy skin of her face wouldn't cooperate. It came out a smirk. "For old times."

"I've thought about you a lot, Allison. The bosses keep me off cases that might link to you, but I hear stories. Shrapnel of the Teragen, wanted terrorist. Hell, I even cheer you on sometimes. If you can stick it to those Utopia twits, more power to you."

Shrapnel raged at the mention of her name, burning a pulsing ache into Allison's skull. She winced before recovering. "You always had a bizarre take on loyalty, Charlie. But I suppose I can't talk, seeing as I'm drinking with a baseline and all."

"Guess not. I never betrayed my people, though. I stood by you when the brigadier wanted you to take out those boys in Ghana." His hand reached over to hers. "I was always loyal to you."

Allison's heart jumped at the contact. His hand was warm and supple. The simple flesh-on-flesh contact sent shivers down her spine. It was so *human*. The headache promoted itself to a migraine, and she withdrew her hand. "Yeah, Ghana was quite the little party," she said.

They continued like that for an hour. Talking about old times and never quite coming around to their feelings. They went through a half-dozen old missions, talking about the comedic and deadly quirks of the covert operations business, about other elites she had faced, about dodging Project Utopia and about others trained at the Farmhouse. But not once did she say how much this *monkey* had meant to her, how much he continued to mean to her.

Oh, she laughed at his jokes, and he did at hers. They were almost in tears howling about an Indian intelligence officer in Kashmir and his attempts to seduce her. But whenever the topic came back to the present, things went sour.

"You must have quite the tales to tell about the last few years," he said sometime after his fifth pint. "Even the Teragen have their cock-ups, I'll bet."

She swallowed hard, Shrapnel pushing hard to get out of Allison. "What are you trying to say, Charlie? You know anything about us? Anything at all?" She barely realized she was hoarse and yelling.

"Ease off, luv. Just a comment."

"Well keep your bloody comments to yourself! Bloody—" She caught herself, but not quite in time.

"What? Bloody *what*?" He was angry and stone-cold sober now. The reminiscing was over. "Bloody baseline?"

She was going to say "monkey," but she let it pass. "This was a mistake. I hoped we could talk one last time...."

"Talk about what, Allison? About how I took a scared little Paddy girl out of Belfast and taught her what she could do? About how you spat in my bloody face and took up with the enemy? How about we talk about that for a while?"

"It wasn't you, Charlie." She swallowed and looked into his burning eyes. "That's all I wanted to say. I did what I did because of who... no, because of *what* I am. You were good to me Charlie, and I never wanted to hurt you. I just wanted you to know...."

"Piss off Allison! It's too bloody late for that tripe! You chose your side, live with it!" And, with that, he was gone.

Part of her was relieved. It would make it easier.

He was crossing the Pont Neuf when she caught up to him 20 minutes later. She was sure it was Charlie, that long stride was unmistakable. She looked within, concentrated on the hot knife stabbing into her frontal lobes and gave in.

Quantum exploded from her node like a small hydrogen bomb, burning away her baseline flesh and replacing it with fiery light. Her skin warped and cracked into crazed and jagged metal; light refracted around her from the heat, and her feet left the ground. Allison was gone and Shrapnel was back. She was nova. She was Terat. And she needed to be free.

"Goodbye, Charlie," she said in her new voice. She raised her hand and quantum pulsed, sending a stream of hot metal shards streaming down the bridge. It hit like a burst of machinegun fire, cutting Charlie to ribbons. He tried to scream, but nothing emerged above the sound of tortured metal.

"And goodbye, Allison." Shrapnel was ready for the revolution at last.

Sample file



# INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Teragen.

To be a nova is to have infinite potential, the power to move mountains and part the seas. The biblical reference is not inappropriate; in 2008, novas are the closest thing humanity has to living gods. They arrived as the world paused at the brink of a new millenium — pollution was rampant, wars raged in every corner of the globe and suffering was universal. In a fiery display of pyrotechnics, the *Galatea* changed everything. Uncertainty and fear melted away, and humanity latched onto their new heroes and expected, even demanded, miracles from them. In a whirlwind of events — the arrival of Project Utopia, the Zurich Accord, the miracle-cures of the Triton Foundation and the political maneuvers of the enigmatic Aeon Society — novas around the planet stopped leading the way and let baselines control them. Brainwashed novas believed it was their duty to die as elites in Africa, to fight criminals and megasyndicates and to find cures to diseases. They never asked why....

But there were those who stood up and took notice. They saw their potential shackled and stripped by paranoid baseline organizations the world over. These visionaries tired of seeing their nova siblings become freaks and commodities in the eyes of the very people they were saving.

From this, the Teragen evolved.

## What Is the Teragen

Freaks, radicals, malcontents, the members of the Teragen are all this and more. No two novas who call themselves Terat are identical, however, and such blanket statements can only hint at the truth. After all, in the world of 2008, few issues are so clear-cut.

First, what the Teragen are not. They are not some sort of super-villain organization bunkered away in a secret base, itching to fight Team Tomorrow and get humiliated once again. Governments and the media like to paint the Teragen as an organized terrorist movement — fanatics and nova-supremacists who are a danger to all, baseline and nova alike. Some Terats do fit this bill, but this is only part of the picture, the part baselines see.

The truth is that the Teragen is more like a family, if a dysfunctional one. They gather not because they are out to conquer the world — though some are — but because they acknowledge and accept their status as more than human, as the “One Race,” to use their own terminology. Divis Mal issued *The Null Manifesto* and proclaimed novas distinct from baselines, but it was a sentiment already whispered by many. Mal just gave it a voice, one that struck a chord in all novas — whether they praised or condemned it. The manifesto shocked and enraged some. In others, it awakened a thirst for violence and power. But some saw it as a rallying call to defend novas from baseline exploitation. For the Teragen, the manifesto was the sign that its time had come at last.

The Teragen is a revolutionary movement. Terats no longer consider themselves human and believe that they are fighting for the rights, if not the very survival, of the nova species. While baselines have yet to start a pogrom against novas, the Teragen understands that it's only a matter of time. Several members believe such a pogrom is already happening just beyond the view of the public eye. Since the very emergence of novas, baselines across the globe have tried to control and limit nova influence and power. Baselines have come to believe that they can expect servitude from novas, and the Teragen believes the time has come to disabuse them of this notion.

Freaks, radicals, malcontents, Terats are more than this. But it's as good a place to start as any.

## Understanding Teras

To understand the Teragen one must first understand Teras, its philosophy. It is the one element that binds the Teragen together, gives it purpose and direction and makes it a unified group. To the Teragen, there is no disputing the fact that novas are not human. Eruption and quantum development are ongoing evolutionary processes; the transition from baseline to nova is a journey most are only beginning. To guide them, the Teragen developed a philosophy, the principal of Teras, which asserts that all novas contain three archetypes: Marvel, Monster and Portent. By living and becoming one of these concepts, a nova gains a better understanding of who she is, and more importantly, *what* she can become.

## The Marvel

Novas are beings of utmost power and potential, but many baselines are unwilling or unable to accept novas for what they really are — living gods. To be a Marvel is to accept and believe that one is not only more than human, but also more than mortal and mundane. With this realization comes a renewed comprehension of eruption and a thirst for power. To Marvels, the whole world is their oyster.

## The Monster

Being a Terat means understanding that life as a nova is a process, a transformation. To achieve one's true destiny, it is necessary to destroy what makes one human — for only by divorcing herself from human limitations (including morals and ethics) can a nova emerge changed.

## The Portent

Terats who embrace the Portent leave behind their baseline fetters, their fears and limitations and embrace raw potential and possibility. They are the ultimate visionaries, freed from human frailty and weakness; they can stare into the abyss of the future, knowing that within them lie all the answers they seek.

# How to Use this Book

**Aberrant: Teragen** gives you and your players insight into the mysterious Teragen for use in an **Aberrant** series, whether as antagonists or characters. It presents all the necessary information, though it does not flesh out every single detail. This gives you the freedom to tailor the Teragen to best suit your players, style of play and series. You could use Terats as straight “bad guys,” but in the world of **Aberrant**, things are always more complicated than that. It is equally possible to play a series wherein the Teragen are the heroes, defending novas from manipulation by the baseline masses. Regardless of how you use the Teragen, the movement presents you with countless ways to make your series richer and more dramatic.

## Breakdown

**Words of the One Race**, the first section of this book, lets you see the Teragen in action; it's a chance to view the world of **Aberrant** through Terat eyes, shedding some light on the goals, conflicts and key personalities of the movement.

**Chapter One: Inside the Teragen** delves deeper into the inner workings of the Teragen. Just who is really pulling the strings? What is Divis Mal's role? And what is to come? Chapter One also presents the Teragen enclave of Blackburn as a starting point for a Teragen series.

**Chapter Two: Storytelling** helps you integrate the Teragen into the **Aberrant** storyline and shows you how to set up and run a Teragen series. It also provides a detailed outline of the Night of Long Knives, an epic story arc that impacts the future and evolution of the Teragen.

**Chapter Three: Beneath the Monster's Skin** looks into the mysterious rituals the Teragen use to control Taint and outlines new quantum abilities available to the Teragen. Chapter Three also details Terat character creation.

**Appendix: Sample Characters** concludes the book with several Teragen archetypes, useful as on-the-fly “villains” or as examples of “typical” Teragen characters.

## Teragen Jive

**cell:** A small cadre of Terats (the player team in most series)

**Chrysalis:** A transformative stage that novas can enter in order to further their evolution and deal with Taint.

**enclave:** A Teragen safehouse where any and all Terats are welcome.

**monkeys:** Derogatory term for *Homo sapiens sapiens*.

**movement, the:** A euphemism for the Teragen.

**One Race, the:** Teragen supremacist terminology for *Homo sapiens novus* (novas). Sometimes “The First Race” or “The Prime Race.”

**Pantheon, the:** The loose group of prominent Terats that guides the movement.

**stage:** According to Teras belief, novas constantly evolve and can rise to higher evolutionary rungs. “Normal” novas are in the first stage; those who have gone through a Chrysalis are in the second stage; those who have undergone the Chrysalis twice are in the third stage.

**Teragen:** The movement centered on *The Null Manifesto*, Divis Mal and the philosophy of Teras. It means “carrier of Teras.”

**Teras:** The philosophy of the Teragen. It proposes the three concepts of Marvel, Monster and Portent to encompass all aspects of novas and their evolution.

**Terat:** A member of the Teragen.

**Upies:** Slang for the lackeys of Project Utopia; pronounced “you-pees.”

**zip:** Another derogatory term for *Homo sapiens sapiens*.

N

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March 25, 2008

## Welcome to the Revolution

• **Voice-Over:** Live from Ibiza, Spain, N! is proud to present the world's most popular interview program, N! Sight, with your host Parker Stevenson!

[applause]

• **Stevenson:** Thank you! Thank you everyone, and welcome to the show. This week we're coming to you straight from the beach in sunny Ibiza. The salty Mediterranean air is full of sun and fun. As you all know, this is one of great nova hot spots, and we're thrilled to bring you here, live!

My special guest tonight is famous — or should I say infamous? — the world over. You've seen him here on N! and on magazine covers for years, watched him on safari in Africa and wondered in your hearts why a man who has it all has become the public face of the murderous Teragen. Ladies and gentlemen, Count Racer Orzaiz!

[mixture of applause, cheers and jeers]

• **Orzaiz:** Good evening, Parker. Thank you so much for having me. I must say, you're quite gracious to have a scandal-ridden rogue such as I on your program.

• **S:** Why thank you, count. You're being much too hard on yourself, but you won't distract me that easily. We're here to talk about you and your connection to the Teragen.

• **O:** Yes, of course. I'm glad to be here to discuss matters with you.

• **S:** Let's start with that question I asked in the intro, shall we? Why do you support the Teragen?

• **O:** Because of who and what I am, Parker.

• **S:** You're the heir to one of Europe's greatest fortunes and the darling of the club scene. That hardly seems to qualify you for terrorism.

• **O:** I'm not a terrorist, Parker. The only blood on these hands comes from irate husbands with broken noses.

[audience laughter]

• **O:** I am *Homo sapiens novus*, however, and it is my understanding of this fact that has led me to be a spokesman for my species.

• **S:** Species, count? Novas may be extraordinary, but they are human. The UN agreed to that a decade ago.

• **O:** The United Nations might well declare that this chair I am sitting on is a rare breed of hummingbird, Parker, but that will not make it so. Novas have evolved from humanity and so we share many commonalities, but that doesn't make us the same. We have staggering abilities that few humans can even begin to understand. Our perspective is simply different.

• **S:** It sounds to me like you're talking about novas being superior to baselines.